

Please find below, Utah State Parks and Recreation news for December 16:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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- Jordan River OHV Center Closed for Season
- Utah Aggressive on Boating Safety, Preparing to Do More
- Upcoming Utah State Parks Events

#### JORDAN RIVER OHV CENTER CLOSED FOR SEASON

Salt Lake City– The Jordan River Off-Highway Vehicle Center is closed for the season. The center may open periodically throughout winter as the weather permits. For updated OHV Center information, please call (801) 533-5425.

# # #

#### UTAH AGGRESSIVE ON BOATING SAFETY, PREPARING TO DO MORE

Salt Lake City– According to a recent report by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), modest gains have been made over the past year on several of its most important safety improvements, including recreational boating safety.

Utah State Parks and Recreation, which administers the State Boating Act, reports Utah has and continues to be a leader in promoting boating safety. It was one of the first states to tie a boating under the influence (BUI) conviction to a person's driver's license and make it illegal for boat operators to be in possession of open containers.

Nearly 15 years ago, Utah also implemented one of the first mandatory boater education laws for youth operating personal watercraft (PWC), which dramatically reduced the number of boating accidents for youth ages 12 through 17.

"Utah has strong boating laws protecting the public," stated Utah State Parks Boating Coordinator Dave Harris. "However, what we lack is a law requiring all boaters to learn state boating safety laws and rules. With the support of the marine industry, the boating public, and our legislators, we hope to implement future laws improving safety on Utah's waterways."

Many studies have shown that boater education reduces accidents. National organizations, including the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the NTSB, recommend each boat operator take a basic boating education course.

The USCG is currently seeking rulemaking authority to require all boat operators on federal waters to take a boater education course. Boaters in states that already require boater education would not need to take the federal course. If implemented, Utah boaters using Lake Powell, Flaming Gorge and Bear Lake would be required by federal law to take a boater education course. Utah State Parks boating managers want a Utah-specific boater education course required before the USCG implements a law affecting all boaters on three of Utah's most popular boating waters.

For more information on Utah's boating laws, please visit [stateparks.utah.gov](http://stateparks.utah.gov) or call (801) 538-BOAT. Wear it Utah!

# # #

#### UPCOMING UTAH STATE PARKS EVENTS

**January 1** Antelope Island State Park - Syracuse

**Christmas Bird Count:** Join members of the Wasatch Audubon Society in their annual bird count and survey of bird species on Antelope Island. Group meets at the park entrance station at 8 a.m. Bring binoculars, scopes and weather appropriate clothing. (801) 721-9569

January – March Wasatch Mountain State Park - Midway

**Guided Snowshoe Hikes:** Join the park naturalist Wednesday through Saturday for guided snowshoe hikes in the park. Beginners are welcome and will receive basic snowshoeing instructions, as well as a little taste of winter ecology. Contact the visitor center to arrange date and time. (435) 654-1791

January 3 Territorial Statehouse State Park - Fillmore

**Statehood Day Dance:** Join park staff for the second annual statehood celebration at 7:30 p.m. with pioneer dance with instruction for the entire family. At 8:30 p.m. a formal dance for those 14 and older begins with a Grand March. This is a formal event and best dress attire is recommended. (435) 743-5316

**January 3** Jordanelle State Park - Heber

**Beavers - Changing the Landscape:** Join the park naturalist from 10 a.m. to noon to learn about nature's engineers and how they are changing the landscape. Bring snowshoes or borrow a pair from the park. Pre-registration is required. Day-use fee is \$7 per vehicle with up to eight people or free to Utah State Parks Pass holders. (435) 782-3030 or (435) 649-9540

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